BENGALURU, MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 27 | Min 15 | Humidity 49% Mostly sunny Sensex 85,712 | Nifty 26,186 | Gold 1,30,419 | Silver 1,83,100 | Dollar 89.93 | Euro 104.78 | GBP 120.07

Get More with Shorts

If it doesn't help sell, what's the point?

Brands, scan to know more

Source: Google/Material, Power of YouTube Shorts, November 2023 (Base: India short-form video watchers, including YouTube Shorts and at least one other SFV platform, n=1,790), Field Dates: 11/7/23 - 11/22/23

YouTube Shorts

Get More with Shorts

72% Indians say YouTube Shorts helps them decide what to buy

6% lift in ROAS

#nanobanana

1.5x ROAS

#Thrifting

4.17% lift in consideration

#YTshopping

4.58% lift in consideration

#makeuphacks

Brands, scan to know more

70% lower CPV

#desibaddie

Results using YouTube Partnership Ads

Source: Google/Material, Power of YouTube Shorts, November 2023 (Base: India short-form video watchers, including YouTube Shorts and at least one other SFV platform, n=1,790), Field Dates: 11/7/23 - 11/22/23

YouTube Shorts

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FULL FORCE

Boost to patrolling, crime prevention as police dept gets much-needed staff reinforcement, 500 officers to join soon

PAGE 3

ABSENT TEACHER

Aided schools face worst crisis in decades as 9,670 teacher posts lie vacant across Karnataka

PAGE 5

Waste accumulated behind sluice gates of Varthur Lake could lead to another flooding situation, say environmentalists, who are demanding civic agencies put out details on status of rejuvenation project, money spent so far and pending work

LAKE VIEW TURNS UGLY AS TRASH TAKES OVER

BDA shifts blame onto slum dwellers for dumping waste

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Everytime Varthur and Bellandur lakes are in the news, the authorities make a big show of clean-up work. But one look at the accumulated garbage at Varthur Lake as of now and one wonders what all the money supposed to be for rejuvenation efforts was actually spent on. The accumulated garbage is an eyesore, it mirrors the apathy of the authorities and waste of payers' money.

Residents of the area and environmentalists are up in arms against Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) for accumulation of garbage. They said the garbage is accumulated behind the sluice gates of the lake and if it is not cleared there are chances of flooding.

"It shows the intrinsic connection between flooding and solid waste management. The chief secretary needs to form a monitoring committee consisting of all stakeholders for both Bellandur and Varthur Lakes, as directed by the National Green Tribunal and call for ongoing meetings to monitor progress of rejuvenation efforts.

We need a white paper on the status of the work, money spent and pending works with timeline," said Elangovan Kulandaivelu, an environmentalist.

He said the garbage and silt in the inlet needs to be cleaned up immediately, so that the wetlands are operational. "We need silt and garbage traps to be installed at inlets. The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board needs to ensure that no

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>

"The quality of water in Varthur and Bellandur lakes indicates that the BWSSB has not done anything to prevent sewage from flowing into the lakes. I demand the BDA provide details on the money spent for rejuvenation of both lakes

—Prof TV Ramachandra, former member of SC-appointed panel

Point to be noted

₹500 notes (new series) top counterfeit chart with 37% jump as compared to previous year

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @sridharVMIRROR

Counterfeit currency detection in India's banking system crossed 2.17 lakh pieces in 2024-25, with the new series ₹500 notes topping the chart for the second consecutive year. According to data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), ₹500 (new series) counterfeits surged to 1,17,722 pieces in 2024-25, marking a sharp 37% jump from 85,711 pieces in the previous year and the highest for any denomination in the last five years.

The ₹100 denomination, which consistently ranked high in earlier years, has witnessed a steady decline—from 1,10,736 fake notes detected in 2020-21 to 51,069 in 2024-25, a drop of more than 53% over the period. In contrast, ₹200 notes have shown a gradual increase, from 24,245 fake notes in 2020-21 to 32,660 in 2024-25.

RBI data shows that while the total number of counterfeit notes has fluctuated over the past five years, the denominations targeted have changed notably. The ₹500 new series has emerged as the most counterfeited, climbing from 39,453 pieces in 2020-21 to more than triple that in 2024-25. In contrast, fake ₹100 notes, once the most common, have steadily declined, while ₹200 notes have shown a gradual rise. Counterfeit ₹2,000 notes spiked to 26,035 pieces in 2023-24 before plunging to 3,508 in 2024-25, likely due to their withdrawal from circulation. The old ₹500 MG series and ₹1,000 notes have remained negligible in recent years. Overall, the total rose

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Art lane

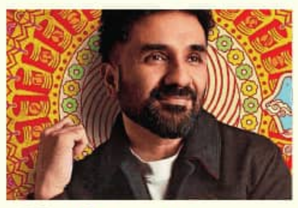
'Beauty Isn't the Point: A Collection of Non-Objective Works', a solo exhibition featuring Chennai-based artist RB Murari's non-objective abstract works, focuses on emotional exploration and inner experience through form, color, rhythm, and silence. **Where: Chitrakala Parishath, Seshadripuram; When: December 8 to 14, 10 am onwards**

02 Groove on

Thaikkudam Bridge will be performing live, bringing their signature fusion of rock, folk, classical, indie, and world music in a high energy concert. **Where: Forum South, Konanakunte; When: December 13, 7 pm**

03 Canvas carnival

India Art Festival (IAF) is back in Bengaluru for its fifth edition, hosting a vibrant showcase of contemporary Indian art, bringing together over 20 galleries and 300 artists from 25 cities across India. **Where: Crown Pavilions, Palace Ground; When: December 12 to 14**



04 Comic journey

Vir Das is set to take audiences on a nationwide audio visual stand up journey, weaving the vibrant sounds of everyday life into a celebration of the nation's subtle nuances. **Where: Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, Konanakunte; When: Dec 20, 21, 7.30 pm**

05 Magical evening

Shibin Harinadh, a mentalist, is presenting an evening of wonder, as he dives into the hidden corners of the mind, in an immersive magical journey. **Where: Zed The Baker, Indiranagar; When: December 13, 8 pm**

Up in arms over voter roll changes

Citizens gather to oppose Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls seeing it as legally questionable, politically motivated, and potentially disenfranchising voters

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

On Sunday, My Vote My Rights, a coalition of organisations from across Karnataka came together for a workshop highlighting the dangers of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) and mobilise resistance against it. The event opened with the release of a booklet titled 'Say No to SIR', outlining the risks and implications of the revision exercise.

Vinay Sreenivasa, an activist, spoke of how the SIR process is being twisted into a de facto National Register of Citizens (NRC) — compelling voters to furnish documents to establish their citizenship, and the default assumption is one of doubt. "When voting rights are taken away, it has to be understood as a civil death. We must note the chronology — now they are doing the SIR, next year they will do the census and the NPR," he cautioned.

Clifton D' Rozario, General Secretary, All India Lawyers Association for Justice (AILAJ) gave a detailed presentation on the legal and constitutional framework of the SIR process and how it undermines the constitutional dream of universal adult suffrage. He said, "Dr Ambedkar said voting was essential to citizenship and to equal moral membership of the polity, and SIR is calculated to undermine this most fundamental of rights." He added, "This is not revision but a disenfranchisement exercise which affects the marginalised communities the most." Shripad Bhat, an activist, noted that while there is a legal struggle, the focus should be on building a strong people's movement capable of compelling the government to withdraw such unconstitutional processes and defend democratic rights.

Heavy workload and mounting pressure over Booth Level Officers have also raised concerns (File photo)

Aishwarya from Peoples Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL) stated that the SIR is resulting in widespread exclusions across various states, disproportionately affecting women, migrant workers, Dalits, Adivasis and other marginalised communities. She also pointed out that in several states, the enumeration forms have not even been printed, yet the process is being rushed in haste.

> **"SIR is not revision but disenfranchisement exercise which affects marginalised communities most**
> – Clifton D' Rozario, General Secretary, All India Lawyers Association for Justice

Shazin from Association for Protection of Civil Rights (APCR) cited experiences from Madhya Pradesh, pointing to serious lapses in the implementation of the SIR. As an example, he noted instances where Booth Level Officers (BLOs) were collecting blank forms with signatures from citizens without issuing any acknowledgment. He said, "In one shocking instance, a BLO committed suicide after facing pressure to exclude more names from backward communities and include more from General category."

"We must recognise the inversion of architecture that SIR brings. Earlier people were voting for the government. Now, the government is deciding who the voters will be," expressed a professor. Shivasundar, an activist, opined that SIR is not just political disenfranchisement, but economic disenfranchisement. "Once the voter ID card is taken away, they will deny access to government schemes," he said.

The workshop concluded with a resolution opposing the rollout of the Special Intensive Revision in 12 states, while expressing concern over the deaths of Booth Level Officers and others linked to the process. Participants also resolved to oppose the National Register of Citizens and to safeguard the fundamental right to vote. The gathering further demanded that, in place of SIR, the electoral rolls be revised through a transparent, inclusive, and people-friendly process.

Ten khata service centres to open in Bengaluru

To address the difficulties faced in filing e-Khata applications across the Greater Bengaluru region, officials will open ten dedicated Khata Service Centres modelled on passport offices. Urban Development Additional Chief Secretary Tushar Girinath said Bengaluru One centres already accept e-Khata applications, and more than a thousand private operators are also authorised to help citizens file requests. Property owners can apply directly online, but nearly eight to ten lakh owners have not yet submitted applications, even though 8.21 lakh have applied and 3.10 lakh have received their Khata. The new centres will be set up across ten zones under the five municipal corporations, each in a building of about five thousand square feet. These centres will handle all services such as converting existing Khata to e-Khata, issuing new Khata and upgrading B-Khata to A-Khata. Tenders have been floated and the centres are expected to open soon. **— BMB**

CID sets up cybercrime investigation training centre

With Bengaluru emerging as a major hub for cyber fraud, the state police have introduced new technology-driven measures to curb growing digital crimes. The Criminal Investigation Department has now established a Cybercrime Investigation Training and Research Centre at its Bengaluru headquarters in partnership with the Data Security Council of India and the Infosys Foundation. The facility includes training halls, a digital forensics resource unit and a research and development wing to improve the skills and capacity of investigating officers. Many police personnel have already received training. Cybercrime cases have risen from 12,550 in 2022 to more than 21,900 in both 2023 and 2024, while 7,961 cases have been reported so far this year. Officials said new learning modules focus on dark web forensics, anti-forensic detection, drone forensics and methods to seize virtual assets. The state has also upgraded its communication systems by replacing analogue networks with digital wireless networks across twenty five districts, four commissionerates and one special unit at a cost of ninety eight crore rupees. **— BMB**

Police urge schools to prioritise safety during trips

Traffic Police have issued a circular advising schools and colleges to give top priority to safety as educational tours begin across the state. The directive stated that the schools must ensure that KSRTC or private buses used for travel have valid fitness certificates from the RTO. Drivers must be verified to ensure they are not under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and teachers must keep a close watch on drivers, especially if the group needs to halt overnight. Schools have been asked to collect contact numbers of police control rooms in every district they visit.

The circular stresses that travel plans must be finalised in advance, including destination, dates, duration

and academic purpose. Head teachers should obtain prior permission from district authorities and hire transport only from trusted operators. Every bus should have at least one teacher and one guard, along with a first aid kit and emergency medical contacts. Schools must maintain a full list of students and parents' phone numbers and secure written consent from families. Authorities said safety must be ensured at every stage of the journey. **— BMB**

More hands to boost city's police force

500 new personnel to join law & order dept by Dec-end; hiring to aid patrolling, crime-prevention

Sanjana CS
c-sanjana.s@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Karnataka's police department has long struggled with a staffing shortage, and the issue has often been at the centre of discussions among officials and the public. By the end of this year, the City Police are set to receive 500 additional personnel, with induction scheduled for this month. These officials will join the Law and Order department, strengthening the police presence across the city and offering immediate relief to overstretched units handling growing responsibilities.

According to City Police Commissioner Seemanth Kumar, the recruitment and training process is in the final stages, and deployment will occur in phases. Once inducted, the personnel will be posted to traffic and law-and-order police stations based on vacancies. Priority will be given to crime-prone neighbourhoods, traffic-heavy junctions, and areas where civic policing demands have risen due to population growth and increasing urban activity. Officials believe their addition will ease the strain on the existing force, which has been managing expanding responsibilities.

Bengaluru currently has around 21,000 police personnel against a sanctioned strength of 24,000, leaving nearly 3,500 posts vacant. This gap places pressure on the force during peak law-and-order duties, large public gatherings, and emergency situations. The shortage has forced personnel to work extended hours, raising concerns about stress, fatigue, and overall efficiency.

Department to focus on effective deployment in high-traffic, crime-prone areas

Current workforce 21,000 against 24,000 sanctioned posts, leaving 3,500 vacancies. Shortage stretches personnel, increases fatigue, and affects efficiency, response times, and public safety during emergencies

The recruitment process is being conducted in two phases. "In the first phase, we are inducting around 500 constables, and they will join the force within this month," the Commissioner said. This recruitment is expected to strengthen patrolling, crime-prevention efforts, and traffic enforcement in several high-pressure zones.

The second phase includes 2,500 new recruits, but this will take longer because candidates must undergo examinations, background checks, physical fitness assessments, and mandatory training before joining field duty. Officials say these steps are essential for readiness and discipline, ensuring that new personnel are prepared for the demands of policing in a rapidly expanding city.

A senior official noted that the recruitment drive aims to improve the quality of policing, not just increase numbers. With the department facing several challenges due to reduced manpower, the shortage has affected response times and stretched personnel across divisions. Ongoing retirements continue to widen the staffing gap, further adding to workloads and making recruitment essential for maintaining public safety.

Civic activist Vinod Jacob welcomed the recruitment but stressed that Bengaluru needs significantly more manpower due to its massive and fast-growing population. He highlighted rising traffic congestion, violent crime, the pressure of managing large public events, ensuring security at critical locations, and handling disaster response and investigations. He pointed to complaints about delayed response times, insufficient patrolling teams, and unsafe public spaces, especially for women and senior citizens.

As of early 2025, Karnataka's sanctioned police strength is around 165 personnel per one lakh population, while the effective number is even lower due to vacancies. Bengaluru's population, estimated at 1.4 to 1.5 crore, continues to grow. With nearly 180 police stations and only 21,000 personnel, Vinod said adding 500 recruits will not be enough to maintain an effective policing ratio. He added that with the Greater Bengaluru Authority conducting a new census, staffing must align with updated population data. He emphasised that effective policing requires adequate staffing levels that match the scale of the city's rapid urban expansion. Without sufficient personnel, he said, the burden on existing officers will continue to rise, affecting public safety. Officials also noted that deployment strategieswill be essential as the city grows.

Car gutted in crash on highway, causes major jam

A car was completely gutted on the Bengaluru–Mysuru Expressway on Sunday morning after it rammed into a fully-loaded milk tanker near Sangabasavanadoddi in Ramanagara district, leading to a heavy traffic jam on the busy stretch.

Police said the car, which was carrying a family of three to Bengaluru, tried to overtake the tanker from the left and crashed into it. The impact triggered a fire in the engine, and within minutes the vehicle was engulfed in flames.

All three passengers managed to jump out in time and escaped with minor injuries. Locals and highway patrol staff rushed to the spot, pulled them to safety, and shifted them to a nearby private hospital.

The burning vehicle brought traffic to a standstill as fire brigade personnel worked to control the blaze and tow the charred shell off the road. Traffic police said the snarl was severe as it was a weekend but was cleared by around 5.30 pm.

Police said the accident could have been caused by speeding and trying to overtake on the expressway and warned drivers to drive carefully on such high-speed roads. However, the Ramanagara traffic police are investigating the exact cause of the accident. **–BMB**

Sabarimala: Transgender devotees from city allege humiliation, forced medical examination

Atiya Firdos
c-syeda.atiya@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

A fresh controversy regarding access to the Sabarimala Temple has emerged after a group of 11 transgender devotees from Bengaluru alleged they were stopped, harassed, and subjected to humiliating procedures by the Kerala Police at Pamba on Monday night. This recalls similar issues from 2018, when four transgender devotees were initially denied entry during the heightened debate over women's access following the Supreme Court's ruling.

According to the group, their ordeal began late on a Saturday night. Despite producing their official identification, including Aadhaar cards and Karnataka-issued "TG cards" (Transgender Identity Cards), officers allegedly demanded far more sensitive information. They insisted on viewing "biological certificates", birth certificates, pre-surgery photographs, old identity documents, and former names, claiming these records were necessary for entry and that standard government IDs were insufficient proof of gender identity. A quarrel reportedly ensued when the group objected to these demands. Consequently, the group was detained until 10 am on Sunday and allegedly taken to hospital for a medical examination.

'Forced examinations'

The devotees alleged that they were humiliated during the medical examination. According to them, the group was escorted by only a one-woman constable and a male sub-inspector to a medical officer, where they were asked to remove their clothes for physical verification and were even instructed to strip further for scanning. The devotees objected, pointing out that all the examining doctors were men and that no woman medical officer was present. Despite their protests, they claimed they were compelled to comply.

They also alleged that the examining doctor showed little understanding of gender-affirming procedures and even wrote a referral to another hospital, expressing uncertainty about their identities.

People arrive to offer prayers at the Sabarimala temple during the Malayalam month of 'Vrichikam', in Pathanamthitta district

After the examination, the group was taken back to the Pamba Police Station, where officers allegedly insisted on further physical verification. The devotees refused, demanding that all eleven members be treated equally and released. Eventually, nine members were permitted to continue their pilgrimage, reportedly after producing additional documents requested by the police and with intervention from senior officials. The remaining three, however, chose to protest the treatment they faced by removing their Sabarimala mala inside the police station and returning without offering darshan.

"We were stopped around 9.30 pm on Saturday. Police demanded biological documents, old IDs, even photos from before our surgeries. Those who showed other documents were allowed, the rest who couldn't were not. We felt humiliated. Three of us removed our mala at the station and returned without darshan. They even questioned my brother's gender and asked for his certificates. They looked at us as if we were odd," a devotee said.

'Violation of rights'

Transgender rights activist Akkai Padmashali strongly criticised the treatment, calling it "a violation of their identity and a violation of their fundamental right to access a place of worship". She alleged that the devotees were denied food, rest and subjected to continuous harassment through the night. She said the community would escalate the matter to higher authorities with a detailed report.

'No such rule'

K Jayakumar (retd. IAS officer), who oversees Sabarimala security, told BM that he was not aware of the incident. He clarified that transgender devotees are allowed entry and that nowhere in the regulations is there any restriction on their access to the shrine.

He also stated that he would address the alleged incident, saying that he would "speak to the officers on the ground to understand what protocol they were following, and examine the incident and address any ambiguities in implementation."

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Women volunteers lead temple drive slashing single-use plastic waste

12-day eco-campaign powered by women volunteers, BSCC marshals and community groups at Ragigudda Temple cuts plastic by 80%

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A group of women volunteers, including Bengaluru South City Corporation (BSCC) marshals, have carried out commendable work at the Ragigudda Anjaneya Temple, significantly reducing the use of single-use plastic during the Hanuman Jayanthi festival. Women of Wisdom, in collaboration with Rotary Spandana, Zero Waste Collective and the MITU Foundation, led a 12-day campaign to curb plastic inflow into the temple. According to Shwetha Urs, Founder of Women of Wisdom, their efforts prevented nearly 80 per cent of single-use plastic from entering the premises. With around 260 street vendors operating near the temple, volunteers advised them against using plastic to pack pooja items, supported by the temple management.

Student volunteers and community groups carried out silent monitoring, documenting instances of plastic use and alerting BSCC marshals, who penalised the violators. Eco-friendly alternatives such as newspaper covers, Blinkit covers, low-cost cloth bags and free paper bags were distributed to vendors and devotees. The festival generated close to one tonne of waste daily, prompting temple authorities to urge devotees to avoid plastic and display awareness boards across the premises.

Marshals from neighbouring wards assisted in enforcement, conducting awareness drives and collecting nearly ₹10,000 in penalties from repeat offenders. The coordinated initiative has earned praise from residents and environmentalists, showcasing how collective civic action can meaningfully reduce festival-related waste.

Temple authorities back the initiative by discouraging plastic use among devotees and installing awareness boards to keep the festival zone environmentally responsible

Nothing is too old to be recycled

NGO's Repurpose 2.0 drive renews efforts to recycle old clothes, e-waste and household items, offering residents proper disposal channels to curb neighbourhood blackspots and prevent illegal dumping

Iffath Fathima
iffath.fathima
@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

City-based civic action NGO Let's Be The Change (LBTC) has launched Repurpose 2.0, a renewed edition of its successful waste-repurposing drive aimed at diverting usable materials from landfills. The initiative focuses on collecting old clothes, books, toys, electronic waste, reusable household items, and dry recyclable waste, ensuring that each item finds a meaningful second life.

According to Shashini H S, Program Manager at LBTC, Repurpose Drive 2.0 is a one-day collection effort held across 10 locations in Bengaluru, including BTM Layout, Koramangala, Hennur–Banaswadi, Horamavu, KR Puram, Hoodi, RT Nagar, Indiranagar, Shantinagar, and Frazer Town. Of these, four drives—Koramangala, Horamavu, Hoodi, and Hennur–Banaswadi—have already been completed. She said the initiative is designed to collect bulky waste such as clothes, chairs, mattresses, and photo frames, items that are often not picked up in the routine waste-collection system.

Shashini noted that many citizens are still unaware of how to responsibly dispose of such materials, leading to illegal dumping and the formation of blackspots. To address this, LBTC ensures that all collected items are routed to authorised recycling or upcycling partners, preventing usable waste from ending up in landfills. To streamline the process, the NGO uses a community-focused outreach model. Residents are first alerted through audio announcements played in daily waste-collection vehicles, followed by targeted communication in RWA WhatsApp groups, where event posters and segregation guidelines are shared. On the day of the drive, citizens hand over clean, segregated waste at designated collection points, assisted by trained volunteers who manage sorting and routing to appropriate channels.

An awareness zone demonstrates segregation techniques and shows how collected waste transforms into new materials, encouraging responsible disposal practices

Let's Be The Change's Repurpose 2.0 engages communities through organised collection points, awareness zones and thrift corners, transforming bulky waste into recycled and upcycled products while inspiring residents to adopt long-term sustainable disposal habits

Repurpose 2.0 follows a five-step model that makes waste disposal simple and educational. Participants register their items, which are weighed, and receive a small upcycled keychain as a token of appreciation. Waste is then dropped off in clearly labelled categories to ensure efficient processing. An awareness zone educates residents through segregation games and demonstrations on recycling, while an upcycled store showcases handcrafted textile products made by women artisans. A thrift corner offers affordable pre-loved items, promoting reuse and mindful consumption. Shashini said the community response has been overwhelmingly positive, with many residents requesting that the drive be held at least twice a year and expressing greater motivation to adopt sustainable disposal habits.

First driverless train unveiled for pink line

BEML has completed the prototype driverless train for Namma Metro's Pink Line, which will run between Kalena Agrahara and Nagawara, and the first set will be unveiled on December 11. The 21.26-km corridor includes a 13.76-km underground stretch with 12 stations and six elevated stations along the remaining section. Civil works and track laying on the 7.5-km elevated stretch between Tavarekere and Kalena Agrahara are nearing completion, with only technical tasks left. BMRCL plans to launch operations on this elevated section by May or June 2026. Officials said six to seven coaches will be required initially for services on the Kalena Agrahara–Tavarekere segment. The first train will be shifted from BEML's New Thippasandra facility to the Kothanur depot for coupling and testing. Under a 2023 agreement, BEML is supplying 16 coaches for the Pink Line and 37 for the Blue Line, and has already committed to delivering 20 coaches by December 2025. An additional ₹7,405-crore contract has been signed for seven more Pink Line coaches. — BMB

Homebuyers push government to table bill

Nearly two and a half years after the Karnataka government began drafting a comprehensive law for apartment governance, the proposed legislation remains stuck in limbo. Although officials say the draft is nearly complete, it has yet to move to the Cabinet for approval, leaving homebuyers uncertain whether it will be tabled during the winter session beginning Monday in Belagavi. Resident groups have intensified their pressure campaign—submitting petitions to Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, meeting senior officials, and launching public awareness drives—urging the government to introduce the Karnataka Apartment Ownership and Management Bill, 2025 without further delay.

Work on the draft began soon after the Congress government took office in June 2023, with former Additional Chief Secretary for Urban Development K Rakesh Singh leading consultations across departments and with the public. The proposed law aims to overhaul the outdated 1972 Act, streamline approvals, clarify builder–buyer responsibilities, strengthen regulation, and ensure transparent, accountable apartment management across Karnataka. — BMB

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Garbage menace

Chamarajpet

Trash dumped on K Srinivas Rao Road in MGK Murthy Layout has created a persistent blackspot, with piles remaining uncleared for days.

Dust & waste buildup

Marathahalli

Spice Garden Road continues to suffer from lack of regular cleaning, allowing dust and garbage to accumulate unchecked along the busy stretch.

Unsafe footpath

Manipal (Varthur Kodi)

The newly built footpath opposite Manipal Hospital remains partially incomplete, forcing pedestrians to navigate uneven and unsafe portions of the walkway.

Short of 9,670 teachers, aided schools struggle

Sector faces serious shortage of teaching, non-teaching staff in absence of systematic recruitment, directly affecting administration and academic performance

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

Without urgent recruitment, learning prospects of lakhs of students could be at risk

The aided school sector is facing one of its worst crises in decades, with chronic vacancies, stalled recruitment and unequal government policies severely undermining classroom teaching and learning outcomes. Despite repeated assurances that education quality and student performance will be improved, the State's approach to aided institutions reveals glaring disparities that have pushed thousands of schools to the brink.

Mounting vacancies

Across Karnataka, aided schools have not seen a single round of systematic recruitment since 2015. Recently, the State granted permission to fill vacancies created between 2016 and 2020 due to retirements, deaths and resignations, but no meaningful progress has followed. In high schools alone, 8,070 teaching posts are currently vacant, in addition to a substantial number of non-teaching positions. As one of the most direct consequences, aided schools have fallen behind in SSLC performance, with officials acknowledging that staff shortages have played a key role.

IN FOCUS Education

In sharp contrast, government schools despite facing similar shortages receive guest teachers as temporary support, along with dedicated funding. Aided schools, however, are offered no such relief. As a result, managements are forced to appoint part-time teachers at their own cost, leading to an unsustainable financial burden. "Teachers have not been recruited in aided primary schools for 23 years and in aided high schools for 10 years," said a teacher from an aided school, adding that the administrative machinery depends on part-time staff, and the entire cost falls on school managements.

Unequal policies

According to 2023–24 education data, Karnataka has 75,869 schools, including 49,306 government, 7,063 aided, and 19,542 unaided institutions. From LKG to PUC, the total student population exceeds 1.19 crore, of which 49.9 lakh study in government schools, 14.6 lakh in aided schools and 54.8 lakh in private unaided schools.

Across Karnataka, aided schools have not seen a single round of systematic recruitment since 2015 and there has been no progress after State recently granted permission to fill vacancies created between 2016 and 2020

Within the aided system, 2,668 aided primary schools employ 10,800 teachers, but over 1,600 posts remain unfilled.

Immediate recruitment of at least 1,300 teachers is essential to ensure smooth functioning, especially for the 5.68 lakh students who rely on these schools. Meanwhile, non-teaching posts have not been filled since 1995, except through compassionate appointments. This gap has forced administrators to run offices with part-time staff, again at management expense.

The academic side is equally strained. "Without teachers, it has become difficult to conduct regular classes. The government must fill the vacant posts immediately," urged Raja Gopal, State President of the Aided Primary School Teachers' Association. "If delays continue, at least guest teachers should be provided," he said.

Performance pressure

Aided school educators also point out the contradiction in the government's expectations. Under the existing rule, if an aided school fails to achieve 60 per cent SSLC results, increments for teachers are withheld. "If the government imposes performance conditions, it must also provide the necessary facilities," argued G Hanumanthappa, State President of the Aided School and College Employees' Association. Frustrated by years of neglect, aided school unions have planned a large-scale agitation on December 16 during the Belagavi Session, demanding immediate recruitment, parity in policy and proper allocation of resources.

Systemic strain

Overall, Karnataka's aided sector faces 9,670 total teacher vacancies, including 2,030 vacant posts in aided PU colleges. "With mounting administrative pressures, uneven government support and increasing enrolment needs, the aided school network stands at a critical crossroads. Unless the State launches urgent recruitment drives and ensures equitable policy implementation, the learning prospects of lakhs of students could be at serious risk," said an aided school teacher.

IN HIGH COURT

Criminal Law misapplied, rape conviction overturned

The High Court of Karnataka has overturned the conviction of a man accused of abducting and raping a II PU student in 2011, holding that the trial court erred in applying provisions of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013, to an offence that occurred two years before the amendment came into force.

Justice G Basavaraja observed that applying harsher penalties introduced in 2013 to a 2011 incident violated Article 20(1) of the Constitution, which bars the imposition of a heavier punishment than what existed at the time the offence was allegedly committed.

According to the prosecution, the student went missing from her home on May 31, 2011, and an FIR was registered four days later based on her mother's complaint. The girl and the accused, a resident of Kanchipuram, were traced in Tamil Nadu on June 9 and brought back to the Bellavi police station in Tumakuru district. In June 2014, a trial court sentenced the accused to eight years' imprisonment under Section 376 of the IPC and three years under Section 366A, along with fines.

During the appeal, the accused argued that the statements of the complainant and the victim were inconsistent and failed to show any inducement, force, or coercion. He contended that the girl had accompanied him voluntarily, negating the essential ingredients of abduction or kidnapping. Justice Basavaraja found merit in these arguments, noting that the prosecution had not been able to prove the charges beyond reasonable doubt.

Holding that the trial court had wrongly applied the amended 2013 provisions, the High Court ruled that such retrospective application violated constitutional protections. It accordingly set aside the conviction and sentence, acquitting the accused. **–BMB**

'Not carrying licence is not proof of negligence'

The High Court of Karnataka has ruled that a motorcyclist cannot be presumed negligent in a road accident merely because he did not possess a valid driving licence at the time. The court also enhanced the compensation payable to the victim, setting aside part of a tribunal's earlier findings.

The case relates to an accident on April 25, 2018, involving Ranjith, a resident of Honnavalli village in Tiptur taluk, Tumakuru district. Ranjith was travelling on the Tiptur–Huliyur road when another motorcycle allegedly ridden in a rash and negligent manner collided with his vehicle near Halenahalli. He suffered fractures and permanent disability and later approached the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal seeking Rs 15 lakh in compensation.

In March 2021, the Tiptur tribunal granted him Rs 6,22,295 with 7 per cent interest, directing the owner of the other motorcycle, Basavarajappa, to pay the amount. The tribunal held that since Basavarajappa's driving licence had expired just eight days prior to the accident, he was not authorised to ride the vehicle and therefore liable.

Justice Umesh M Adiga observed that under the proviso to the unamended Section 14 of the Motor Vehicles Act, a driving licence continues to be valid for an additional 30 days beyond its expiry date, during which it can be renewed. **–BMB**

IN BRIEF

Property row: Man pushes uncle, causing his death

A 35-year-old farmer from Garampalli village in Chintamani taluk has been arrested for allegedly causing the death of his uncle during a scuffle over a property dispute on Friday night.

The deceased, KL Narayanaswamy, and the accused nephew, Madhusudan, lived in adjoining houses and had long-standing disagreements over their share of ancestral land, police said. Madhusudan allegedly turned up outside his uncle's house late Friday, and during a fight allegedly pushed his uncle, causing him to fall against an iron gate, resulting in a severe head injury. **–BMB**

Mandatory helmet rule to be back in Chikkaballapura

After nearly nine years of relaxed enforcement in several parts of Chikkaballapura district, police have decided to strictly reinstate the mandatory helmet rule to curb rising road fatalities.

District Superintendent of Police Kushal Chowksey said the rule was never withdrawn, but compliance collapsed over the years. "The helmet rule is not something new, it has always been in force.

The problem is with the compliance as riders stopped following it, and this is reflecting in our accident numbers. In 2024, we had 340 deaths and 758 injuries. This year, up to November, we have already recorded 333 deaths and 900 injuries. Helmets clearly reduce severity of injuries," he said. **–BMB**

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Not a pretty sight

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

raw wastewater enters the lake," he said. Demanding that the BDA officials take measures to clear garbage without delay, Jagadeesh Reddy of Varthur Rising said the BDA officials have to publish the list of remaining works in both the lakes — Varthur and Bellandur. "The rejuvenation of Varthur Lake will not be completed until the diversion channel is removed.

The Minor Irrigation pipeline should be moved to the periphery of the lake as directed by National Green Tribunal (NGT), the monitoring committee appointed by the apex court," said Reddy.

Coming down heavily on the authorities for sub-standard rejuvenation work, Prof TV Ramachandra, one of the former members of the monitoring committee appointed by the Supreme Court, said the accumulated garbage is the testimony of weak government and parasitic departments. "The accumulated garbage indicates that the Bengaluru City Corporations are not taking measures to maintain storm water drains. If the quality of water in Varthur and Bellandur lakes is any indication, it seems the BWSSB has not done anything to prevent sewage from flowing into the lakes. I demand the BDA provide details on the money spent for rejuvenation of both lakes. I am of the opinion that the rejuvenation of lakes was not done as per what was expected," said Prof Ramachandra. However, BDA Assistant Executive Engineer Kavitha Krishna said garbage has flown into the lake through the storm water drain.

"There is a slum near the lake. Some of the slum-dwellers throw garbage into the lake at night. We are set to hand over the lake to the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA). I will take measures to clear garbage after getting the permission from higher authorities," the assistant executive engineer said.

₹100 counterfeits witness steady decline

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

marginally from 2,08,625 in 2020-21 to 2,17,396 in 2024-25, without a consistent upward trend.

Currency in circulation

As of March 31, 2024, currency in circulation in India stood at ₹35.11 lakh crore, up from ₹28.53 lakh crore in 2020-21. RBI attributes the rise to GDP growth, inflation, interest rates, and overall demand in the economy. At the same time, digital transactions, especially UPI, have expanded rapidly—from 92 crore transactions in 2017-18 to 13,116 crore in 2023-24, with 172 billion transactions processed in 2024. Despite this digital surge, cash remains a significant part of the economy.

Measures against counterfeiting

Sources said that the Government, RBI, and NPCI have undertaken multiple measures to tackle counterfeit currency and promote digital transactions. These include the Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) to expand digital infrastructure in under-served areas, incentives for low-value BHIM-UPI and RuPay card transactions, and legislative changes to discourage high-value cash use.

While ₹500 notes remain the prime target for counterfeiters, the downward trend in ₹100 fakes and the fall in ₹2,000 detections after their withdrawal suggest shifting patterns in illicit currency production—posing a challenge for enforcement agencies and monetary authorities alike.

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

THIS is to notify the public that I, Anita Karat,D/o. Late. Mr. K.P.Menon and Mrs. Bhagya Leela Karat aged about 50 years, residing at #39, Pottery Road, Richards town Bangalore 560005, have changed my name to Anita Karat for all purposes vide an Affidavit, on e-stamp paper bearing Certificate No. IN-KA15613311102642X, dated 6th December 2025.

I, Lavender Francis Resident Number 109, 1st Floor, Mythri Paradise Apt, Maragondanahalli, Bommasandra, Jigani, Blr-560105, changed My Name from Lavender Hazel Francis to Lavender Francis for all further purposes. (Reference Date of Birth 07/08/1986 & Passport No Z3021295).

I, Padmavathy Narayanappa R/o No.565, 11th cross, woc road, 2nd stage, Nagpur, Mahalakshmipuram, Bengaluru 560086 have changed my name to Padmavathi Narayanappa. I shall be called by this name for all purposes

I Hanamshetty Atharva Hanamshetty S/O, Vishwanath Hanamshetty R/o 109 Nandi Manomay Arcade 1st Main Sai Lotus Layout Beml 5th Stage Rr Nagar Bangalore 560098 have changed my name to Atharva Hanamshetty

I, Seema Sharma, spouse of Sushil Sharma resident of P-16, Ground Floor, Sector 13, Jeevan Bima Nagar, Bangalore - 560075 have changed my Name from Seema Sharma to Seema vide Affidavit no IN-KA066-48914679319X dated 26 Nov 2025.

I, Yenmakaje Shyam Prasad Shetty R/o 1082, 18th B main, 5th block, Rajajinagar Bengaluru 560010 have changed my name to Shyam Prasad Shetty. I shall be called by this name for all purposes

I, H Ramachandra Rao, S/O Late H Vencoba Rao, No 214-4A Breeze Enclave, 4th Main Road, JagaJyothi Layout, GnanaBharati Post, Nagadevanahalli, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560056, have changed my name from "Hebbatam Ramachandra Rao" to " H Ramachandra Rao " for all purposes.

I, Praveen kumar s/o rangappa Jalahalli,#10 2nd main 4th cross Vijayanagar Bengaluru 560040,I change my name to Praveen kumar Rangappa

I, Samiulla Abdul Rahim S/o Abdul Raheem R/o 51/3,87th Main Road Padarayanapura Chamrajpet, B'lore-560026 have changed my name to Samiulla.

LOST & FOUND

I,PRABHATHI Bhaskar D/O B V Bhaskar have irretrievably lost my class 10th ICSE pass certificate- 2017 UID-6598442 Lost Report No. 1942194/2025

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ANDHRA PRADESH WITH STATUE OF EQUALITY 10/6* DAYS
DEC: 12, 14*, 21*, 22, 25, 28* JAN: 1, 4*, 11, 11*, 18*, 21, 25*
SHIRDI NASIK/PANCHA JYOTHIRLINGA* 7* DAYS
DEC: 15*, 28, 29* JAN: 4, 5*, 11, 12*, 18, 19*, 25, 26*
KERALA SPECIAL/ NAVAGRAHA DARSHAN* 7/4* DAYS
DEC: 14, 21, 22*, 28, 29* JAN: 1, 5*, 11, 12* 18, 19*, 25, 26*
SOUTH INDIA 7/10* DAYS EX: MANGALORE DEC: 15, 22, 22* 29 JAN: 19, 26
SOUTH INDIA 9/11* DAYS EX: HUBBALLI DEC: 12, 12* JAN: 16*, 20, 27* 30

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NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Watch talk

DyCM DK Shivakumar brushed off chatter over his pricey watch after he and CM Siddaramaiah were spotted sporting luxury timepieces at a breakfast meet. DKS clarified he bought his watch in Australia seven years ago for ₹24 lakh using his credit card—already declared in his affidavit—and even invited doubters to check the statement. Claiming he knew nothing about the CM's watch, he quipped it might have been gifted by Siddaramaiah's son, adding that his own late father left behind seven watches that his family still uses.

iPhone request

Former CM Jagadish Shettar was stunned when a caller identifying himself as Prateek Malaji rang him asking for a brand-new iPhone 17 Pro Max. After politely enquiring about Shettar's health, the caller abruptly sought "a favour"—the latest iPhone. A bemused Shettar replied, "Do people ask MPs for this?" before hanging up. The bizarre audio clip has since gone viral, leaving netizens amused and puzzled.

Traffic lesson

DyCM DK Shivakumar hit back at MP Rajeev Rai's complaints about Bengaluru's traffic chaos, saying he would personally "tag him" during a live demonstration in Delhi to show how the capital manages traffic. Rai, who posted screenshots of unanswered calls to traffic control while stuck for an hour on Rajkumar Samadhi Road, later clarified that his criticism was aimed at traffic management—not the government. He also remarked that Karnataka, unlike BJP-ruled states, doesn't file FIRs over criticism, and praised Bengaluru as one of India's safest cities for women at night.

Dog rescues

In Kodagu, a two-year-old girl who wandered off into a vast coffee estate was found after a nail-biting night search—thanks to a local dog named Oreo. As forest staff and residents fanned out across the plantation the next morning, Oreo picked up the trail and led rescuers straight to the frightened toddler, reuniting her safely with her relieved parents.

Verbal duel

A sharp verbal clash erupted in Shivamogga between Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa and MLA Araga Jnanendra after the minister called him "Baccha" while responding to criticism of the government's guarantee schemes. Jnanendra shot back citing his electoral experience, asserting that politics demands seriousness. Madhu countered that he judges by experience, not appearance. Their exchange triggered swift BJP reactions, highlighting the simmering rivalry between the two local heavyweights.

ATM drama

Belagavi witnessed a heist straight out of a crime caper when three masked men hauled an ATM onto a hand trolley and wheeled it away. Their plan fizzled when the machine refused to dispense any cash, prompting them to dump it by the roadside and flee. Police traced and recovered the abandoned ATM within two hours, while locals are still chuckling at the surreal sight of an ATM being carted around like runaway luggage—another chapter in the state's growing ATM-theft spree.

—Sridhar Vivan

BM SIMPLY PUT

Understanding the rupee's decline amid India's rapid growth

Rupee riddle

The rupee crossing 90 against the dollar drew sharp public attention even though India's broader economy remains steady. Many are asking why the currency keeps sliding despite strong growth. Here is a simple breakdown of what drives the fall and what it means for everyday life.

Why does the rupee lose value against the dollar?

The US Dollar anchors most global trade, so India pays for oil and other imports in dollars, not rupees. The exchange rate keeps shifting because the world has followed a dollar-based system since the Second World War, when the US held the largest gold reserves. This structure makes rupee movements normal and frequent.

If India is growing fast, why is the rupee still falling?

Strong growth does not always mean a strong currency. Foreign investors move funds wherever they find better returns. When they pull money out of India and convert it into dollars, demand for the dollar rises. This pushes the rupee down. In just the first four days of December, thirteen thousand crore rupees left the market, and more than one lakh fifty six thousand crore rupees has exited so far this year.

How do inflation and interest rates influence the rupee?

India has been facing higher inflation, but the Reserve Bank kept interest rates unchanged for a long time and even cut the repo rate by 0.25 per cent on December 5. Lower returns make India less attractive for foreign investors compared to the US. When they withdraw funds, pressure on the rupee increases.

Do global taxes or trade tensions matter?

Yes. The US has kept higher tariffs on certain Indian goods. This affects market sentiment and fuels speculation. Even expectations of future policy moves can add pressure on the currency.

Is geopolitics linked to the recent slide?

The dollar accounts for nearly 70 per cent of global trade, so global developments often influence its demand. The fall earlier this year drew little attention, but the latest slide made headlines because it came during Russian President Putin's India visit. Political timing often shapes how currency movements are viewed.

How does a weak rupee impact prices?

India pays for crude oil in dollars. When the rupee weakens, the same oil becomes costlier even if global prices do not rise. Electronics, automobiles and other imports also become more expensive.

Who feels the impact first?

Companies with foreign loans, import heavy industries and government linked entities face the initial hit. They usually pass on the increased cost to consumers. Households may see higher prices in the coming weeks.

Which goods will become more expensive for consumers?

Imports like crude oil, electronics, automobiles, and machinery will cost more because India pays for them in dollars. Even if global oil prices remain stable, the domestic rupee cost rises, leading to higher fuel and consumer product prices.

Will any goods become cheaper?

Domestic products priced in rupees are largely unaffected in the short term. Exports may gain a slight advantage as Indian goods become cheaper for foreign buyers. However, everyday items dependent on imports will not see price reductions.

Will interest rates rise because of this?

A weaker rupee adds to inflation risk, which usually leads to higher interest rates. Costlier loans hurt businesses. For now, the Reserve Bank has chosen not to tighten policy further and expects the rupee to stabilise.

Should people worry about this fall?

Not yet. Currency fluctuations are part of global trade. The Reserve Bank intervenes only when the slide becomes excessive. The current movement is within manageable limits and such ups and downs are a regular feature of an open economy

Belagavi session set for political fireworks

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The Legislative Session at Belagavi's Suvarna Soudha, beginning Monday, is expected to turn into a high-voltage political battleground, with the Opposition gearing up to corner the government on a range of unresolved regional concerns, administrative lapses, and recent controversies. Leaders of the BJP and JD(S) have held a series of closed-door consultations to plan their strategy, instructing members to raise issues in a phased and coordinated manner to maximise pressure on the ruling Congress. Since the last session in August, multiple contentious developments—including allegations of corruption, policy inconsistencies, budget underutilisation, and delays in key projects—have provided the Opposition ample ammunition for an aggressive attack.

A significant flashpoint is likely to emerge over the government's unfulfilled commitments to North Karnataka. The Opposition plans to demand a comprehensive status report

File photo of Belagavi session in 2024

on promises made during the previous Belagavi session, arguing that the region continues to face chronic neglect despite repeated assurances. They are also preparing to spotlight internal discord within the ruling party—differences among MLAs, factionalism, ministers' frequent visits to Delhi, and contradictory statements by the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister—claiming these issues have resulted in administrative drift. According to them, the ruling camp's series of breakfast, lunch, and dinner meetings have produced more political theatrics than governance outcomes.

Law and order is expected to spark heated exchanges as well. The Opposition alleges that Bengaluru's central prison has become a haven of privilege for criminals and extremists, with regular reports of drugs, phones, weapons, and liquor being recovered. They also point to rising cases of extortion involving police personnel, daylight thefts, and crimes against women and children, demanding accountability and corrective action from the government.

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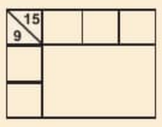
SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

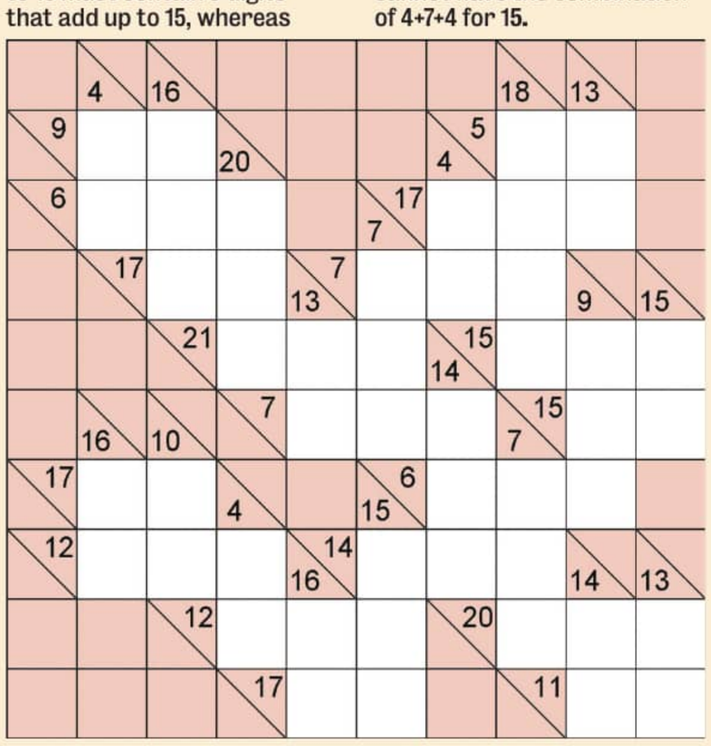
Twice the factorial of a number is 200 more than one-third the factorial of the number. What is the number?

Kakuro

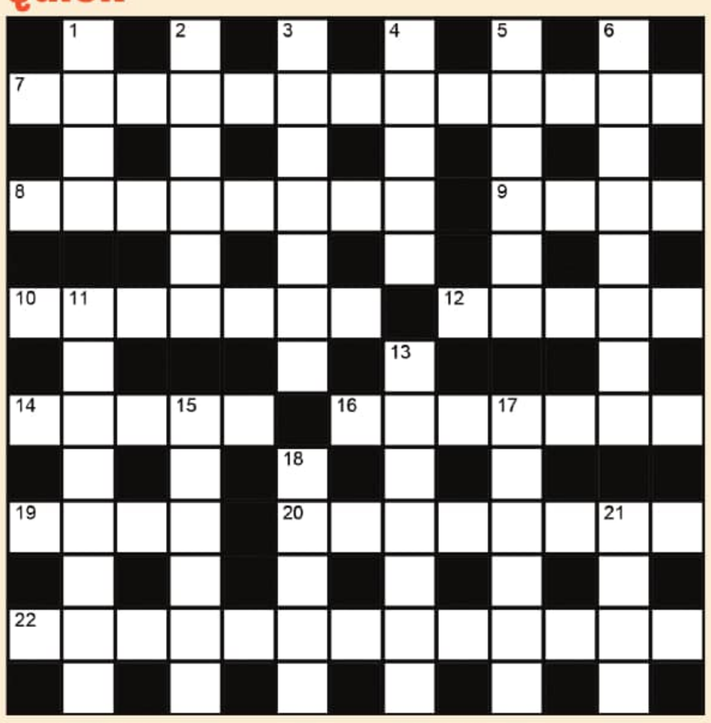
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Examining unknown values (13)
8 Goes forwards (8)
9 Indian clarified butter (4)
10 Makes beloved? (7)
12 Insect stage (5)
14 Supply of goods (5)
16 Integers (7)
19 Widespread (4)
20 Subject to abnormal anxieties (8)
22 Gaining of understanding (13)

DOWN

1 Chopped down (4)
2 Wrinkle (6)
3 Gourmet (7)
4 Guns N' Roses guitarist (5)
5 Mark of disgrace (6)
6 A rapid preliminary inspection? (4-4)
11 Nourishing substance (8)
13 Sewn surgically (7)
15 Belief or trust (6)
17 Bears flowers, flourishes (6)
18 National park home to tigers, panthers and elephants (5)
21 Small hotels (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: V EQUALS G

HRO KLS VBZC MBJPROJ DRZ-BSV, NOJ HRO KLS SCZCG DRZC MBJPROJ VBZBSV.

Linemaro

Do you have a jersey? Because I need your name and number

Mindchow

With most people, disbelief in a thing is founded on a blind belief in some other thing

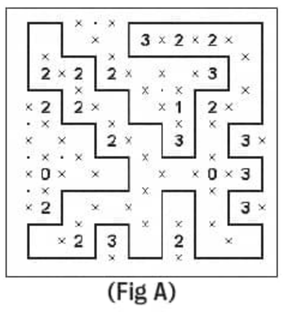
Joke of the day

I remember when Grandpa's memories started to go; it was the day I caught him urinating with the door open... which is not a huge deal, but it's annoying when I'm trying to drive

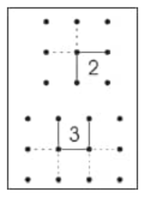
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

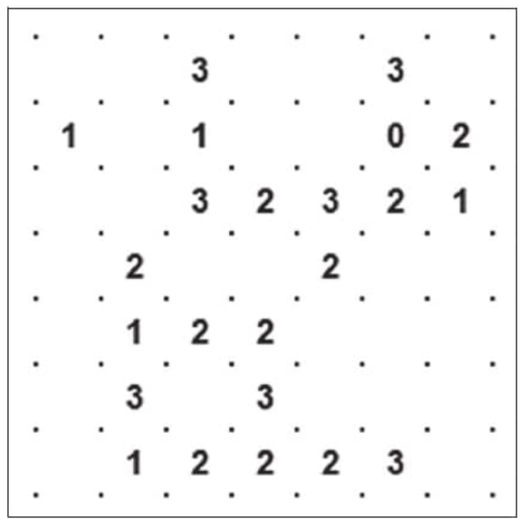


(Fig B) Not Allowed

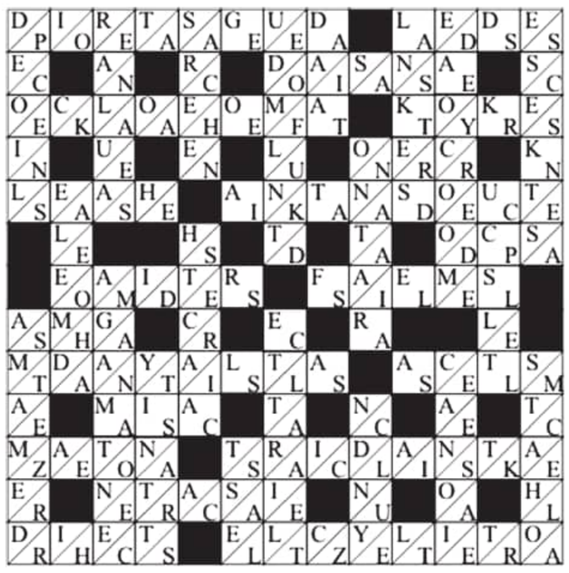
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



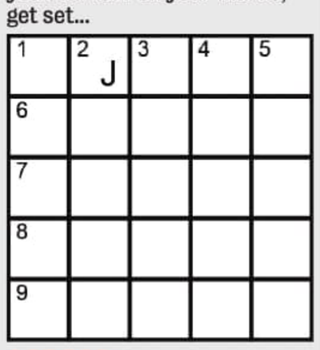
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 For JD; 6 Do roe; 7 Runed; 8 Small; 9 Pays H

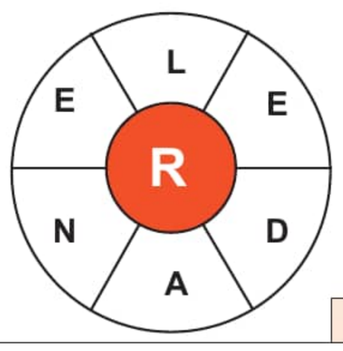
DOWN

1 FP rum; 2 A John; 3 DD Loy; 4 Leers; 5 Roads

Mensapuzzle

Fill in the final box to complete the sequence.

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

20 Average; 22 Good; 25 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	7	4		3		1	9	
2	5						4	8
			6		2			
	2	7		8		4	5	
	9	5		7		3	1	
			5		1			
1	4						2	5
	6	2		9		8	3	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy

2 3 4 7

Medium

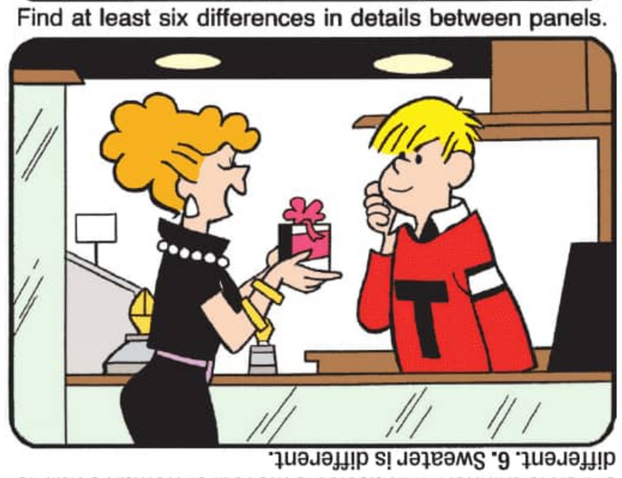
2 4 5 7

Hard

1 3 9 9

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



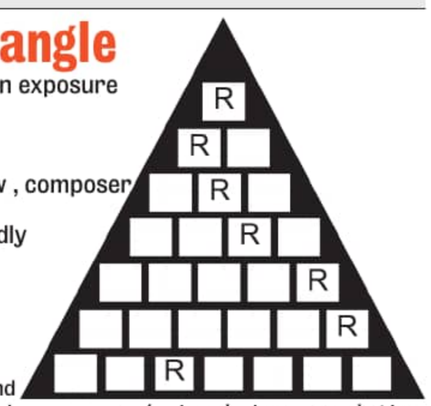
Differences: 1. Stripe is moved. 2. Light is moved. 3. Belt is thinner. 4. Bracelet is moved. 5. Woman's hair is different. 6. Sweater is different.

Riddler

Our can be found with fingers alone.. And no, one is not one. Even two is (not are), the only one that's even. Like 65,537. What is it?

Alpha triangle

1 A unit of radiation exposure
2 Again, abbr.
3 Plural is
4 Tortoise foe
5 The Merry Widow , composer
6 Horse restraint
7 Terrestrial, worldly



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye

Bizarrotrip

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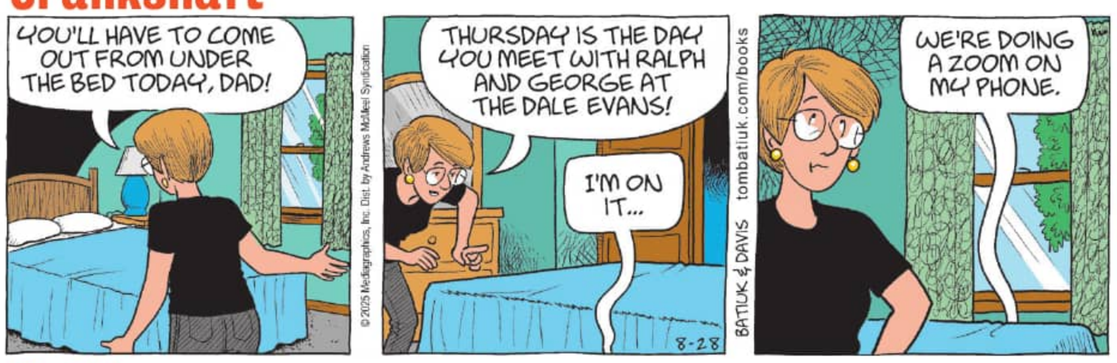
Wayno & Piraro 8-28-25
You think this is a dump? The first-floor unit is even worse.
Dist. by King Features
INFERIORITY DUPLEX

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

Crankshaft


YOU'LL HAVE TO COME OUT FROM UNDER THE BED TODAY, DAD!
THURSDAY IS THE DAY YOU MEET WITH RALPH AND GEORGE AT THE DALE EVANS!
I'M ON IT...
8-28
WE'RE DOING A ZOOM ON MY PHONE.
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BATIUK & DAVIS
tombatiuk.com/books

Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

The winds of fortune favour bold, ethical choices today. Sagittarius, your inherent fairness shines through in all negotiations. If you've been debating a significant ethical stand, now is the time to take it publicly. Your integrity will earn respect from peers who admire your commitment to principles over temporary gain. Move forward with confidence in your moral compass.

Aries Mar 21–Apr 20

Excitement fills your day! Monotony fades as a thrilling new challenge appears. Though demanding, it'll energise you completely. Embrace the rush, enjoy every moment, and let adventure rekindle your passion.

Taurus Apr 21–May 20

Good news awaits you at work, promotion or new prospects may appear. Though unexpected, embrace them positively. Evening brings romance, so dress your best and enjoy the charm of love.

Gemini May 21–Jun 21

Health takes priority today. Avoid going out and rest at home. Work remotely if possible. Rejuvenate your mind and body, spend peaceful time reconnecting with loved ones and simple comforts.

Cancer Jun 22–July 23

An old connection resurfaces seeking support. Offer compassion, they once helped you too. Listen without judgment. At work, fresh opportunities arrive, accept them confidently and let kindness and ambition guide you forward.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

You may sense distance in friendships today. Reconnect with people who once stood by you. Work can wait, nurture relationships and restore emotional balance by showing genuine care and appreciation.

Virgo Aug 24–Sep 23

A hectic morning awaits, but your efficiency shines through unfinished tasks. By afternoon, peace returns, spend quality time with loved ones or friends over coffee. You've earned a refreshing break.

Libra Sep 24–Oct 22

Teamwork defines your day. Collaborate openly both at work and home. Share your ideas confidently, listen actively, and showcase leadership that inspires harmony and shared progress in every sphere.

Scorpio Oct 23–Nov 22

Today brings admiration and respect from those around you. Trust your intuition, it'll guide wise decisions. Follow your heart sincerely, and everything you choose today will benefit you and others.

Sagittarius Nov 23–Dec 22

Tasks left incomplete yesterday finally reach success today. Effiency and luck align, making this day highly productive. Expect accomplishments, appreciation, and pleasant surprises boosting your spirit throughout the day.

Capricorn Dec 23–Jan 20

You might feel others controlling situations today. Step back gracefully, let them contribute. Stay open to suggestions, respond kindly, and express opinions gently to maintain peace and mutual understanding.

Aquarius Jan 21–Feb 19

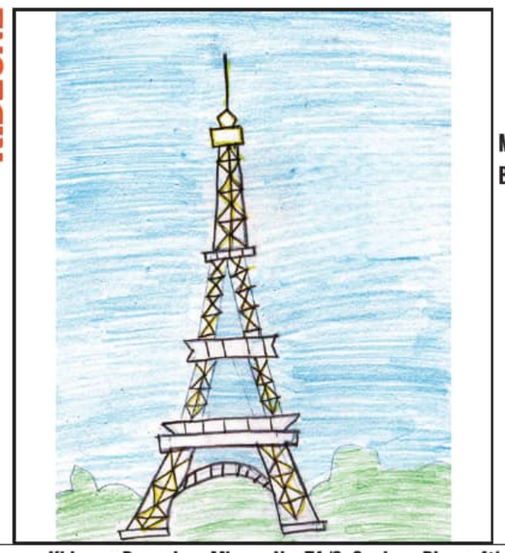
Frustration might build at home or work. Breathe deeply and meditate to realign. A loved one's sweet surprise will lift your mood, care for your health and restore emotional balance.

Pisces Feb 20–Mar 20

New financial ideas emerge, don't rush decisions. Evaluate carefully, noting pros and cons. Seek advice from someone reliable before committing. Thoughtful planning today ensures long-term stability and lasting financial growth.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

2x!=200+x!/3; Multiply by 3
6x!=600+x!; 5x!=600
x!=120
x!=5*4*3*2*1; x=5

BULL'S EYE

alder, dare, darn, dealer, dear, deer, earl, earn, earned, elder, endear, lard, leader, learn, LEARNED, leer, lender, near, neared, read, real, reed, reel, renal, rend

FAST FIVE

A	S	Y	H	P
A	L	L	A	M
S	D	N	U	U
E	D	O	R	R
O	R	D	J	F

STRIKE OUT

QUICK

MENSA PUZZLE

2. Add the numerical values of each pair of letters and write the answer, as two separate digits in the boxes underneath.

RIDDLER

Prime

QUOTE UNCODE

You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving.

SUDOKU

6	7	4	8	3	5	1	9	2
2	5	3	7	1	9	6	4	8
9	8	1	6	4	2	5	7	3
3	2	7	1	8	6	4	5	9
4	1	6	9	5	3	2	8	7
8	9	5	2	7	4	3	1	6
7	3	8	5	2	1	9	6	4
1	4	9	3	6	8	7	2	5
5	6	2	4	9	7	8	3	1

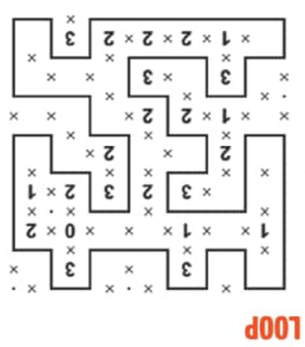
ALPHA TRIANGLE

R, Re, Are, Hare, Lehar, Halter, Earthly.

GO FIGURE

3-4 + 7 + 2 = 8
Easy
5-7 + 4 + 2 = 4
Medium
9 + 3-1-9 = 2
Hard

LOOP



KAKURO

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 # No emotions
Hollywood actor Adrien Brody makes scathing remark against AI, says AI cannot replace emotion

No FOMO

Radhika makes it clear that geography doesn't impact her career choices

Radhika Apte, one of the most versatile and fearless performers in Indian cinema, has built a reputation for choosing unconventional roles across projects like 'Sacred Games', 'Ghoul', and 'Lust Stories'.

Known for her honesty and zero-nonsense attitude, the actress continues to balance her life between London and Mumbai while working across films, OTT, and international content. In a recent conversation, she opened up about whether living away from Mumbai affects her career, and her answer was as candid as ever.

During a chat with IANS, Apte was asked whether not being permanently based in Mumbai causes her to lose out on work opportunities. Brushing off the idea completely, she said she doesn't believe geography impacts her career choices.

Radhika explained, "If I want to do something, I'll come there. And if I miss it, I miss it. There's something else I have here. So, I don't believe in that."

Calling herself someone who is grounded and realistic about life, she added that she never feels pressured by the fear of missing out. "I don't have any FOMO about missing out on anything. I don't think anything is as big as we think it is, you know."

Radhika Apte entered the film industry with a small role in the 2005 film 'Vaah! Life Ho Toh Aisi!'. Over the years, she steadily shaped a remarkable filmography with titles like 'Shor In The City', 'Kabali', 'Phobia', 'Badlapur', and the acclaimed short film 'Ahalya'. **—ETimes**

If I want to do something, I'll come there. And if I miss it, I miss it. There's something else I have here. So, I don't believe in that

Incongruous mash of a film

KEMPU HALADI HASIRU
2.0 RATING ★★☆☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Mani AJ Karthikeyan
- **ACTORS** Srihan Deepak, Divya Suresh, Shailashree Mulki, Aravind Bolar, and Vijay Kumar Chindodi
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 102 minutes

Mani AJ Karthikeyan, who is known for Goujii Gammath, his Tulu movie in 2023, debuts in Kannada with Kempu Haladi Hasiru. Though the topic of this film is good, the lax screenplay proves to be its undoing. The movie claims to be a comedy thriller, but it fails to be funny or thrilling.

The director should have edited out some scenes that have made it to the film without any justification. Songs look like they are inserted in and they hinder the narration. Some of the characters too are unjustified. For example, one of the heroines plays an air hostess, but there is not even a single scene of a flight or an airport. The other heroine, a traffic police inspector, who falls in love with a grocery store worker, appears in just a dream song sequence and then disappears from the screen till the climax. There is a scene in which the hero is seen beside a dead body, but the very next scene does not indicate that the protagonist has got into any kind of trouble because of that.

The movie is about three employees – Arjun, Somu, and Bunty – of a departmental store in Mangaluru. Arjun (Srihan Deepak) prefers to lead a simple life even though his father is a businessman. He has to borrow money from a financier and ekes out a living by delivering goods at the doorsteps of customers on an old motorcycle. Arjun meets Sakshi (Divya Suresh), an airhostess, who falls in love with him. At the same time he meets Dhanya (Shailashree Mulki), who also falls for him. At this juncture, director introduces Vardhan Rao (Vijay Kumar Chindodi) who assigns a task to Arjun. You have to watch the movie to know whether Arjun accomplishes it and what happens to Shakshi and Dhanya.

Most of the actors have to hone their acting skills if they want to continue in films. It is worth your time only if you have nothing else planned. **—Y Maheswara Reddy**

So what else is new?

Just days after stepping into the most cherished role of his life—fatherhood—Vicky Kaushal has also added a new set of wheels to his garage. The actor, who welcomed a baby boy with Katrina Kaif on November 7, has purchased the ultra-luxurious Lexus LM350h 4S, priced at Rs 3.20 crore.

Earlier this week, Vicky was seen at an event in Mumbai, and as he headed out, the spotlight shifted to his latest acquisition. The four-seater Lexus, known for its plush interiors and premium comfort, marked his first major buy post the arrival of his son.

In a recent conversation with GQ India, Vicky reflected on his shift into parenthood with heartfelt clarity. "Becoming a father this year is my biggest moment of 2025. It is a magical feeling," he said. He added that while he expected overwhelming emotions, it turned out to be something deeper, "I always felt that when the time comes, I will be all very emotional and ecstatic, but it has actually been the most grounding moment that I have ever experienced in my life." The couple shared the news of their baby's arrival with a warm template on social media. **—ETimes**

'Followed processes'

Rana Daggubati, who was recently summoned by authorities in connection with an investigation into an alleged betting app, addressed the matter at the launch of his new alcohol brand, Loca Loka. Keeping his remarks brief, the actor-producer said he has "always followed the due process," adding, "Those are legalities that keep changing. They'll take their due course. There's a law of the land, and we'll always abide by it."

Ask him how mindful he is while attaching his name to any brand and he states, "The first thing is getting the product right—if the quality is fine and what you're putting out there is fair, that's as mindful as I would be while attaching my name to anything."

As the conversation around celebrity investments grows louder, Rana said he has long been part of the investing world, but with a clear sense of responsibility. "You won't ever be a domain expert unless that's your core business," he said. "Spirits isn't my domain expertise, but I'm a consumer who understands the space. On actors increasingly backing brands, he added, "Everyone

invested earlier too—real estate, stocks—you just didn't know about it. Today there are more opportunities, more brands, and people are simply more aware." **—Vinay Mishra, ETime**

Black Friday deal

Grammy-winner Miley Cyrus has quipped that her engagement ring from fiance Maxx Morando was a "Black Friday deal" after he proposed during their recent trip to Japan.

During an appearance on Jimmy Kimmel Live!, the host suggested Maxx should have waited until Christmas to pop the question, telling Cyrus: "Your fiance, I wonder if he realizes ... if he waited like, three weeks he wouldn't have to come up with a Christmas gift."

The "Flowers" hitmaker then pipped: "This was (a) Black Friday deal, baby." She added: "It wasn't but he was smart that way. It might have been. I'm not sure." During the show, Cyrus went on to reveal she isn't looking forward to the holidays because she has a big issue with Christmas as she hates paper, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She explained: "Well,

Christmas, I'm known as a little bit of a grinch because I have a qualm with Christmas. I hate paper … Like, looking at that [paper on your desk] makes me want to vomit … The problem is people have dry hands and they touch paper and then it's Christmas and it's cold and everyone's hands are dry and they're all touching paper. When someone sends me a letter, I don't even open it." The singer went on to joke: "That's why I got engaged. I make my fiancé open all the packages." **—IANS**